

# MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

# DIGITAL

# DIVIDE

## GROUP 27

We are Group 27, collaborating with LifeShare a homelessness charity in Manchester. We would like to raise awareness related to the issue of 'digital exclusion', how digital inclusion plays into the bigger picture of ensuring everyone has equal access and opportunities to the life enhancing benefits the digital world can provide. The core focus is 'reducing inequalities'; particularly citywide inequalities which plays into the Greater Manchester Digital Inclusion Agenda. Despite the U.K. being an 'economically developed' country, the technological skills gap is wide.

## SKILLS

Students will be involved in mostly a graphic design processes and client interaction. Throughout the project students will be working with Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign. The main aim is to use graphic design knowledge, to follow real life practice guidelines and engage with the initial stages of the RIBA plan of work. Learning how to use mapping software to create interactive maps that can be implemented in both digital and physical media.

## WHO WE ARE

Ahmed Ali  
Charlotte Bromley  
Jan Laming  
Nitya Devgun  
Youssef Mohamed



Visit [msa.ac.uk](http://msa.ac.uk) for more information



# MSA LIVE 22

# Team

- AHMED ALI (M Arch 01)
- CHARLOTTE BROMLEY (M Arch 01)
- JAN LAMING (M Arch 01)
- NITYA DEVGUN (M Arch 01)
- YOUSSEF MOHAMED (M Arch 01)

- DANA ALSAYED (BA 01)
- KAKASHAN KHAN (BA 01)
- MALAVIKA RAMKUMAR PAVOTHIL (BA 01)
- RUPA BURN (BA 01)
- YIANG WU (BA 01)
- ANDREEA MOCANU (BA 02)
- GLEB SHARABINSKII (BA 02)
- HAONAN GUO (BA 02)
- ISABELLA MEARNIS (BA 02)
- NIAMH HOUGH (BA 02)

# Partners

We are working with the homelessness charity LifeShare to tackle the digital exclusion that the poorer elements of society are faced with on a daily basis - affecting their ability to access jobs, opportunities, and information.

The MDC (Manchester Digital Collective) is comprised of several participatory organisations such as 'Back on Track', 'Barnabus', or 'Mustard Tree' which operate to tackle homelessness. LifeShare already help aid the homeless with shelter and food provisions - however their tireless work via the MDC in tackling the often ignored aspect of digital exclusion makes them an intriguingly unique charity.

Our primary contact with LifeShare/MDC has been Zara Bobat, who we thank for being tremendously helpful in providing us with vital information, statistics, and advice about the charity's methods, strategies, and goals.

We would also like to thank staff from Manchester School of Architecture, namely Emily Crompton, Jason Taylor, and Dominic Sagar - who's help throughout the project aided us in making planning, concept, and design choices.

# DIGITAL DIVIDE

## INTERACTIVE MAP

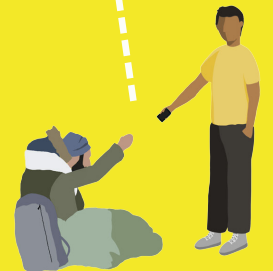
+

## DIGITAL CAMPAIGN

We ran a 2 week project to create an interactive map, alongside a digital social media campaign that would then be able to support a physical, in person campaign. Throughout MSA Live, we liaised with the Client, to create an overall set of outputs that would match and compliment the graphic style established by the conversations undertaken between ourselves and the Client.

Digital Divide worked with Lifeshare and MDC, a homeless charity and digital collective, respectively, to act to support people between the ages of 16-24, homeless and elderly, that have never owned or used modern technology like smartphones or laptops.

As much of the country has migrated use of vital social services - like healthcare, jobs, and payment for goods - online, those who have never had the opportunity to use technology in a large capacity, suffer exponentially in comparison. The campaign aims to bring awareness to the MDC, created around the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, through the digital campaign, but remains aware that many people who would need services do not have the means to view this. As such, a complimentary physical campaign was created to avoid being contradictory to the issue of digital exclusion.



# MDC/LifeShare Information

The MDC brings different charities in Manchester to work together towards one mission of “No more Digital Exclusion”. MDC focuses on providing people with access to E-Learning platforms, webinar facilities, access to devices - and helps in spreading awareness of digital poverty.

The MDC is powered by Lifeshare and provides free equipment, free training, and funding information. Everything is shared so that less time is spent on researching and applying more to those schemes.

Whilst LifeShare is primarily focused on more conventional charitable activities (e.g. sleeping facilities and food security), MDC’s targeting of digital poverty prioritises an often invisible form of exclusion in our ever-modernising society.



## FOUR CORE MOTIVES



**DEVICES:** Provides people with an access to the digital world.



**INTERNET ACCESS:** Provides internet access with the help of other organisations.



**LEARNING:** Helps in gaining benefits to the digital world and provides free online digital training courses.



**AWARENESS:** Helps to make people become aware of the digital exclusion.

## TESTIMONIALS: LIFESHARE’S IMPACT



“I can use my phone to call the foodbank before I arrive.”



“Thank you... with the mobile phone I can access my UC and look for jobs.”



“...now that I have an email address I can keep in contact with family and friends.”

## HOW DIGITAL SKILLS HELP

**87%**

Helps them to connect better with family and friends.

**55%**

Makes them feel more part of the family.

**44%**

Helps them to manage physical and mental well-being.

**75%+**

Helps them to learn digital skills and eventually improve their job prospects.

**£348**

On average more is spent on household bills for those without digital skills.

**68%**

Of 11 to 18 year olds say they’d find it difficult to complete school work without the internet.

The used devices and the digital skills can eventually help people in learning the online basics. Examples include setting up a phone or Wifi, setting up emails, filling out online forms, etc. Further benefits include online safety, improving online healthcare services, creating spreadsheets and documents using office programs, and accessing public services online. It also helps the disadvantaged in managing their money via banking access, finding jobs online, and increasing their social circle through socialising online.



LIFESHARE OFFICES: Visited on 16th May 2022



LIFESHARE OFFICES: Speaking with Client at their offices, and gaining understanding of the task.



# INTERACTIVE MAP | FINAL DESIGN

## INTERACTIVE MAP - FIGMA



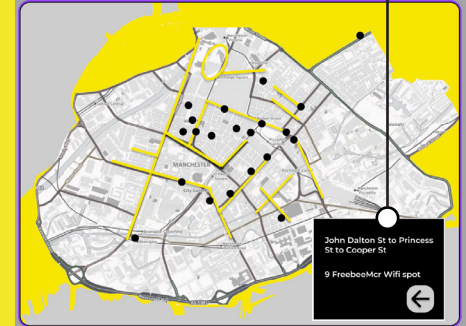
Interactive Key Points: e.g., LifeShare Offices

Simple Interface and search 'layers'

MDC Logo



Key Information appears when hovering



LANDMARKS



DROP-OFF SERVICES



MAIN OFFICE AND PICK UP SERVICES



FREE WIFI & BT HUBS



MANCHESTER  
1824  
The University of Manchester

Manchester  
Metropolitan  
University

LIFESHARE



MSA  
LIVE 22

The final design for the interactive map includes four core topics, highlighting the important services LifeShare and MDC offer. The user is able to hover over different aspects of the map, which will provide them with additional information to easily locate the different services across Manchester

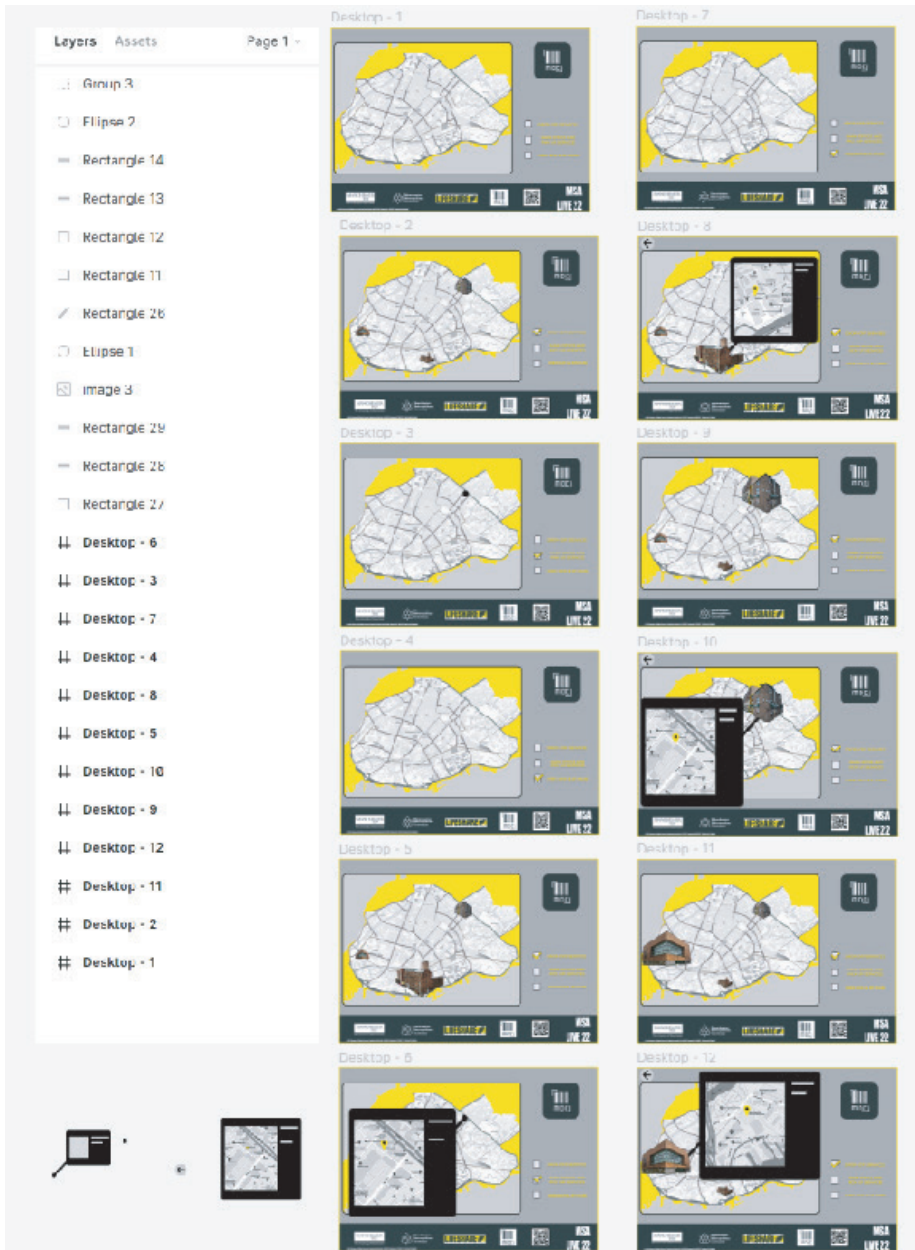
Selection of areas for focus (regions which one can zoom in on)

Barcode to take people straight to relevant website



# INTERACTIVE MAP | FIGMA SOFTWARE

Figma was selected as the software to be used due to its ability to be used collaboratively. Seen below is the flowchart method of arrangement that makes it relatively simple and effective to use.



# INTERACTIVE MAP | FINAL DESIGN PROCESS

## 1. KEY LANDMARKS IN MANCHESTER IDENTIFIED



The team produced a base map using Photoshop which shows the area LifeShare and MDC provide their services. We added icons of key landmarks across Manchester to enable the user to orient easily.

The next step was producing a layer to locate the main drop-off points LifeShare provide for donations of any digital devices to help with their campaign. The team produced an illustrations of the buildings to easily locate them.

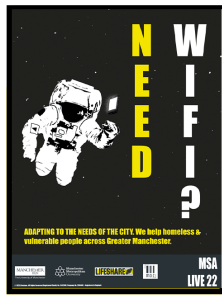
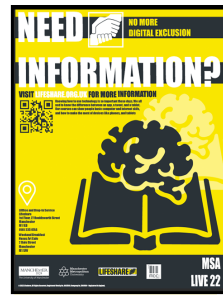
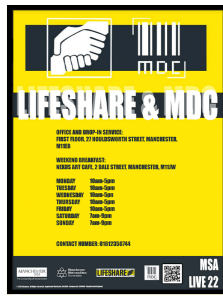
## 2. DROP-OFF LOCATIONS



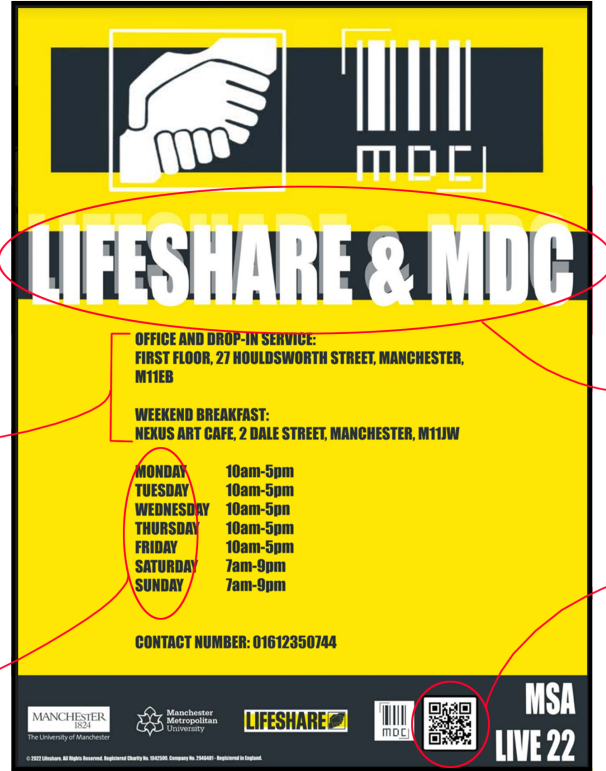
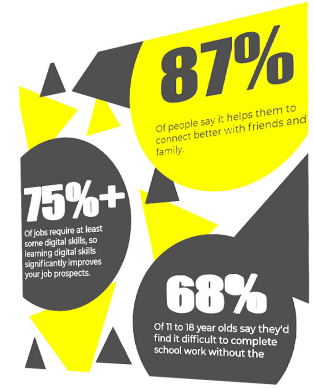
## 3. FREE WIFI ZONES



Finally, we added the main streets across Manchester which people can access free wifi. Using Figma, as the user hovers over the street, the address and postcode appear to easily locate the area.



# POSTER DESIGNING



Key information regarding gadget drop-off locations and the food services are mentioned in the poster to highlight the important services the charity provides

Lifeshare and MDC used as title for the main poster to raise awareness for both organizations

Barcode is included in the banner at the bottom of the poster to easily link the charity's website for additional information

The font and colour palette used throughout the posters, followed Lifeshare's graphics guidance provided

**OFFICE AND DROP-IN SERVICE:**  
FIRST FLOOR, 27 NOULDSWORTH STREET, MANCHESTER, M11EB

**WEEKEND BREAKFAST:**  
NEXUS ART CAFE, 2 DALE STREET, MANCHESTER, M11JW

MONDAY	10am-5pm
TUESDAY	10am-5pm
WEDNESDAY	10am-5pm
THURSDAY	10am-5pm
FRIDAY	10am-5pm
SATURDAY	7am-9pm
SUNDAY	7am-9pm

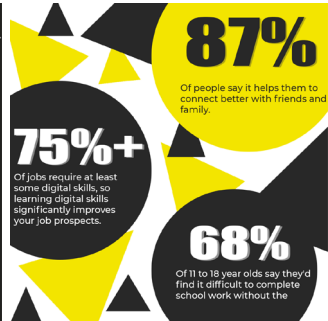
CONTACT NUMBER: 01612350744







Social Media Tile 001



Social Media Tile 002



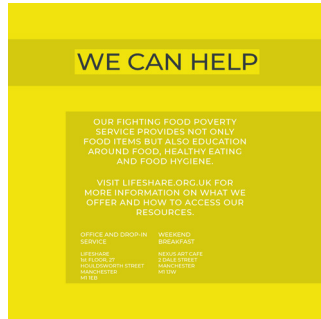
Social Media Tile 003



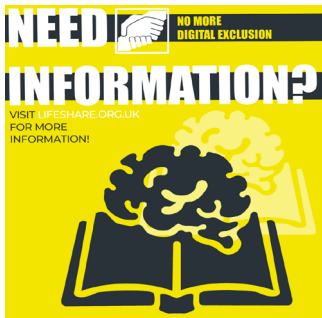
Social Media Tile 004



Social Media Tile 005



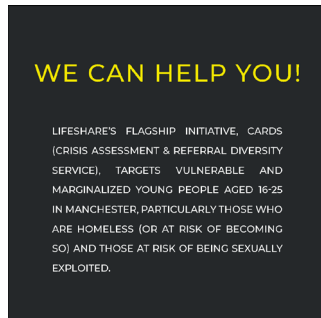
Social Media Tile 006



Social Media Tile 007



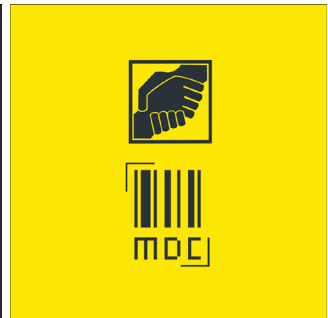
Social Media Tile 008



Social Media Tile 009



Social Media Tile 010



Social Media Tile 011

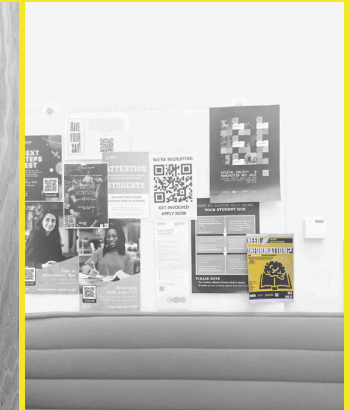
## PHYSICAL CAMPAIGN: POSTERS AND THEORETICAL PLACEMENTS



Posters in leaflet-holder.



Poster in display.



Poster on noticeboard.



Posters in leaflet-holder.



Posters working with other posters.



Posters in magazine-holder.



Theoretical urban placement 001 (Bus-shelter)



Theoretical urban placement 002 (Phone Booth)



Theoretical urban placement 003 (Digital Screen)

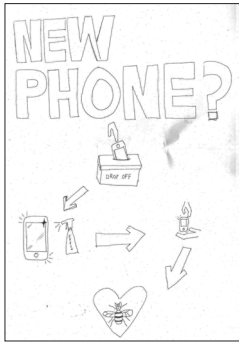
## SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN TILES

The undergraduates in charge of posters then covered their designs into even simpler, stylised tiles that could be utilised on social media such as Instagram. This required identifying elements of the posters which carried the most symbolic/relevant weight.,





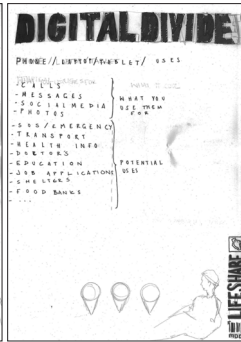
**Poster 001:  
Skills**



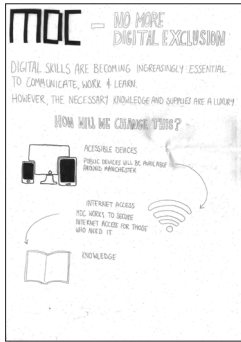
**Poster 002:  
Phone drop-off process**



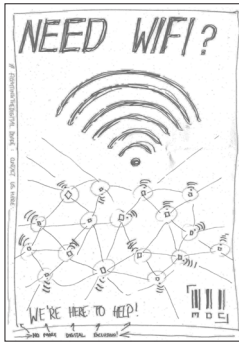
**Poster 003:  
New Phone**



**Poster 004:  
Uses**



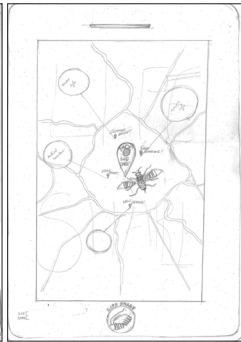
**Poster 005:  
Concept of MDC**



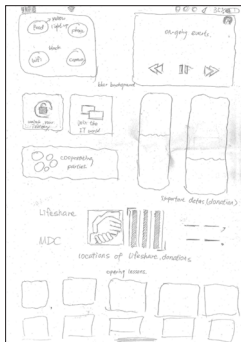
**Poster 006:  
WIFI**



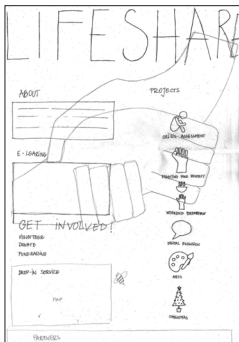
**Poster 007:  
Locations**



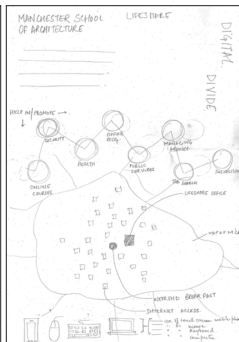
**Poster 008:  
'Phone-screen'**



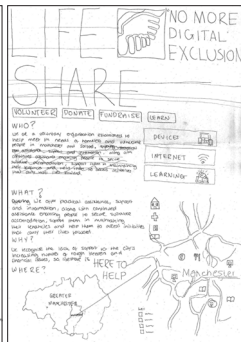
**Poster 009:  
'Settings'**



**Poster 010:  
Services**



**Poster 011:  
Connectivity**



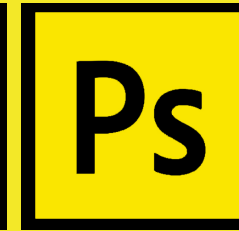
**Poster 012:  
Geographical Reach**

## DESIGN PROCESS AND SKILLS

The goal of the project was to allow undergraduates to learn a variety of skills over the two weeks the project spanned. This included analogue and digital abilities. Firstly, we began with poster designs which were created using hand-drawing. These were developed and finalised using digital softwares such as InDesign, Photoshop, and Procreate. Using group-sessions and team discussions - these graphics were utilised by those creating the interactive map using Figma; a collaborative web-design software. In this way, students worked both independently and as teams, and also explored new methods of design.



**Adobe InDesign  
(Layouts)**



**Adobe PhotoShop  
(Graphics and Editing)**



**Procreate  
(Graphics)**



**Figma  
(Website Design)**



**Group collaboration and teaching of skills.**



**Group discussions and planning ahead.**

## CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

The project helped all students involve gain a greater understanding of the issues surrounding digital poverty and exclusion - and what is being done to tackle this digital divide. The outputs of our project seek to create two ways of increasing exposure and awareness of both these issues and charities such as LifeShare/MDC who are tackling them. Physical advertising campaigns - the posters - are effective, particularly in urban areas such as Manchester - in communicating issues graphically, but so are the converted social media tiles derived from them.

The central output - the digital map - can be added to LifeShare's website due to its simple format - and will help effectively communicate information to those in need or those wishing to help. Furthermore, this diversity of strategies means that both those with and without digital means can discover the help they need or wish to contribute to.

## ABOUT

Each year the MSA LIVE programme unites M Arch. year 01 with B Arch. year 01 and 02 and M Land. Arch 01 in mixed-year teams to undertake live projects with external partners to create social impact.

## LIVE PROJECTS

All MSA LIVE projects are live. A live project is where an educational organisation and an external partner develop a brief, timescale, and outcome for their mutual benefit.

## SOCIAL IMPACT

All MSA LIVE projects have social impact. Social impact is the effect an organization's actions have on the well-being of a community. Our agendas are set by our external collaborators.

## EXTERNAL PARTNERS

MSA LIVE projects work with many organisations: charities, community groups, social enterprises, community interest companies, researchers, practitioners and educators.

## STUDENT-LED

Our MSA masters students take the lead in the project conception, brief development, delivery and co-ordination of a small project. Other cohorts joined for an eventful 2 weeks of activities at the end of the academic year.

## KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Working in teams within and across year groups and courses; MSA students participate in peer to peer learning. In addition, collaborators, participants and students engage in the transfer of tangible and intellectual property, expertise, learning and skills.

## LARGE SCALE

This year approximately 550 students from 4 cohorts in MSA have worked on 35 projects with partners.

## QUESTIONS

For questions about MSA LIVE please contact the MSA LIVE team:  
[msalive@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:msalive@mmu.ac.uk)

## BLOG

[live.msa.ac.uk/2022](http://live.msa.ac.uk/2022)

## SOCIAL

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## WEBSITE

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